

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLES, MAY 27, 1975

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

NO. 1

1. GWERTZMAN, "US GAINS TIME BUT LACKS OPTIMISM ON ME ACCORD? PRESIDENT FORD AND HAK HAVE UNEXPECTEDLY WON ADDITIONAL TIME--PROBABLY AT LEAST UNTIL END OF THIS YEAR-- FOR THEIR EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A DIPLOMATIC BREAKTHROUGH IN ME AND FORESTALL ANOTHER ARAB-ISRAELI WAR THAT THEY FEAR MIGHT OTHERWISE RESULT.

BUT DESPITE BREATHING SPACE FORD ADMINISTRATION IS NOT UNDERTAKING NEWEST ROUND OF ME MEDIATIONS IN A MOOD OF MUCH OPTIMISM. AREA'S PROBLEMS SEEM AS INTRACTABLE AS EVER. THERE ARE MANY PESSIMISTS HERE WHO ASSERT PRIVATELY THAT THE ARE REALLY INSOLUBLE.

AFTER 2 MONTHS OF REASSESSING THEIR ME POLICY, ADMIN OFFICIALS ARE STILL GROPING FOR ANSWERS. THEY BELIEVE INSTINCTIVELY THAT HAK'S STEP BY STEP APPROACH IS DEAD. BUT FORD WILL NEVERTHELESS MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO RESURRECT IT WHEN HE SEES SADAT ON SUNDAY IN SALZBURG, AND RABIN IN WASHINGTON ON JUNE 11.

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FORD WILL TRY TO SUCCEED WHERE HAK FAILED IN MARCH BECAUSE ONLY RECOGNIZED ALTERNATIVE TO STEP BY STEP PROGRESS IS RECONVENING OF ME PEACE CONF IN GENEVA.

THIS WOULD BRING ISRAEL, EGYPT, SYRIA, USSR, US AND PERHAPS JORDAN AND SIX OR SEVEN OTHER COUNTRIES TOGETHER FOR AN INEVITABLE EXERCISE IN POLEMICS.

CHANCES FOR SUCCESS IN SUCH MEETING APPEAR EXTREMELY SLIM TO OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON WHO HAVE STUDIED POSSIBILITIES. FAILURE IN GENEVA WOULD PROBABLY HASTEN CHANCES OF A NEW CONFLICT.

EVEN MOSCOW, WHICH HAD BEEN ADVOCATING FORECFULLY RECONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE, HAS COOLED CONSIDERABLY IN ITS ARDOR.

WHEN GROMYKO MET WITH HAK IN VIENNA LAST WEEK HE APPARENTLY AGREED THAT NEW GENEVA MTG SHOULD NOT BE HURRIED -- A SHIFT IN SOVIET THINKING CAUSED BY MOSCOW'S OWN ANALYSIS, LIKE WASHINGTON'S, THAT ODDS FAVORED FAILURE AND NOT SUCCESS AT GENEVA.

HAK AND GROMYKO AGREED IN VIENNA TO CONFER AGAIN IN JULY AFTER FORD HAS HAD TIME TO PRODUCE HIS OWN POLICY STATEMENT ON ME, BASED ON HIS TALKS WITH SADAT AND RABIN.

GENEVA SESSION WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN DETAIL IN JULY BY HAK AND GROMYKO, OFFICIAL CO-CHAIRMAN OF CONFERENCE, AND A DATE MIGHT BE SET, PROBABLY NO SOONER THAN LATE AUGUST BUT MORE LIKELY NOT UNTIL FALL.

US GAINED MORE TIME LAST WEEK WHEN SYRIA, MOST UNPREDICTABLE OF ARAB STATES, DECIDED TO RENEW MANDATE OF UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE ON GOLAN HEIGHTS FOR 6 MONTHS. EARLIER SYRIA WAS BELIEVED READY TO LET MANDATE FOR TROOPS WATCHING ISRAELI-SYRIAN FRONT LAPSE THIS WEEK, OR EXTEND IT 2 MONTHS AT MOST.

EGYPTIANS HAD AGREED TO AN EXTENSION OF ONLY 3 FOR UN FORCE UNCLASSIFIED

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IN SINAI. THIS HAD LED TO CONCERN THAT SYRIA MIGHT RENEW MANDATE ON GOLAN UNTIL ONLY END OF JULY AND THEREBY CAUSE A RISE IN TENSIONS DURING SUMMER.

SYRIA'S DECISION--WHICH WAS MADE FOR REASONS NOT COMPLETELY CLEAR, PERHAPS HAVING SOMETHING TO DO WITH HER CURRENT FEUD WITH IRAQ--HAS APPARENTLY REMOVED DANGER OF SUMMER CRISIS, HOWEVER.

SOVIET UNION, WHICH HAD HELD EXTENSIVE DIPLOMATIC CONSULTATIONS IN 2 MONTHS SINCE COLLAPSE OF HAK'S DIPLOMATIC SHUTTLE, MAY HAVE ENCOURAGED SYRIAN MOVE, SOME OFFICIALS HERE BELIEVE.

ACCORDING TO THIS VIEW, MOSCOW REALIZED THRU CONTACTS WITH EVERY IMPORTANT ARAB STATE AS WELL AS WITH ISRAEL, THAT LIKELIHOOD OF AN EARLY DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION IN GENEVA WAS SO REMOTE THAT IT WAS BETTER TO ALLOW MORE TIME FOR ADVANCE PREPARATION, EVEN IF THIS MEANT DELAYING RECONVENING OF CONFERENCE.

WHEN HAK RETURNED FROM ME IN MARCH, HE IS KNOWN TO HAVE BELIEVED THAT GENEVA MTG WAS INEVITABLE, THAT SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY WAS DEAD, THAT EGYPTIANS WERE LIKELY TO ADOPT AN EXTREMIST POSITION, THAT SOVIET UNION WOULD HAVE MORE INFLUENCE IN AREA, THAT ISRAEL WOULD BE MORE ISOLATED INTERNATIONALLY THAN EVER AND THAT WAR WAS LIKELY WITHIN A YEAR.

HAK'S ANALYSIS HAS PROVED LARGELY FAULTY.

IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE, OF COURSE, WHETHER HE WAS RIGHT ABOUT A NEW WAR, BUT ADMIN NOW BELIEVES THAT SOME KIND OF DIRECT APPROACH TO PEACE IS STILL POSSIBLE, IN PART BECAUSE EGYPTIANS HAVE NOT TAKEN A MORE EXTREME POSITION AND ISRAELIS, INSTEAD OF BECOMING MORE ISOLATED, HAVE GAINED NEW STRENGTH ON CAPITOL HILL AND HAVE SIGNED AN IMPORTANT TRADE AGREEMENT WITH EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.

SOVIET UNION HAS NOT GAINED PERCEPTIBLY IN AREA. IN FACT, ITS RELATIONS WITH EGYPT MAY EVEN HAVE WORSENERD SINCE SADAT CRITICIZED MOSCOW'S REFUSAL TO GIVE HIM MORE ARMS
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OR TO RESCHEDULE HIS DEBTS.

SITUATION IN ME WHILE NOW CALM, IS NOT SAME AS IT WAS BEFOR HAK'S LAST EFFORT IN MARCH.

MARCH SHUTTLE FAILED BECAUSE NEITHER EGYPT NOR ISRAEL COULD TAKE KIND OF DECISIVE ACTION NEEDED.

ISRAELIS WOULD NOT WITHDRAW FROM 2 MOUNTAIN PASSES IN SINAI SOUGHT BY EGYPT UNLESS SADAT AGREED IN WRITING TO SET OF CONDITIONS THAT IN EFFECT TOOK EGYPT OUT OF WAR.

SADAT OFFERED CERTAIN CONCESSIONS, SUCH AS AN AGREEMENT THAT ALL DISPUTES WITH ISRAEL SHOULD BE SETTLED BY NEGOTIATIONS AND NOT FORCE SO LONG AS ACCORD WAS VALID. EGYPT AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE VALID UNTIL NEW ACCORD WAS REACHED.

ISRAELIS ASKED HAK HOW LONG HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEFORE EGYPT WOULD PRESS FOR NEW ACCORD. HAK REPLIED THAT ON BASIS OF HIS TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE AT LEAST 2 YEARS.

ISRAEL OFFERED TO WITHDRAW PART OF WAY FOR THESE CONCES-

SIONS, BUT EGYPT REFUSED SUCH A DEAL. NOW IT IS REPORTED THAT ISRAEL WOULD ACCEPT 3-YEAR PROPOSAL RATHER THAN 5 YEARS SHE ORIGINALLY PREFERRED.

IN AFTERMATH OF FAILURE, HAK PROBABLY MADE A TACTICAL MISTAKE IN PRIVATELY HOLDING ISRAEL RESPONSIBLE FOR BEING SHORTSIGHTED IN NOT ACCEPTING COMPROMISE THAT WAS POSSIBLE, SOME OF HIS AIDES SAID.

THIS PROVOKED BITTER DISPUTE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND FORD ADMINISTRATION. IT HAS STILL NOT ENDED COMPLETELY.

FORD, WHO HAS NEVER MET SADAT, WILL PROBABLY TRY TO PERSUADE HIM TO MEET ISRAEL HALF WAY, AND PERHAPS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS THAT WOULD PRODUCE A COMPROMISE FROM ISRAEL.

MAIN PROBLEM FOR FORD IS THAT SADAT HAS JUST COMPLETED A TOUR OF ARAB CAPITALS, VOWING TO GO TO GENEVA AND PRESS UNCLASSIFIED

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FORD TO STATE WHETHER HE AGREES THAT ISRAEL MUST GIVE BACK ALL LAND SHE HAS OCCUPIED SINCE 1967.

HAK SAID ON SATURDAY THAT FORD WOULD NOT ANSWER SADAT'S QUESTION ABOUT ISRAEL'S FRONTIERS SINCE THIS MUST BE HANDLED THRU DIRECT OR INDIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BY PARTIES INVOLVED.

FORD WOULD LIKE TO BRING ABOUT A NEW EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI ACCORD. BUT IF HE FAILS TO PRODUCE ANY CONCESSIONS FROM SADAT--AND FEW OFFICIALS HERE BELIEVE HE WILL--IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT RABIN WILL PROVE ANY MORE FORTHCOMING.

THIS WILL PROBABLY FORCE FORD ADMIN TO DEAL PUBLICLY WITH QUESTIONS IT HAS STUDIED BUT PREFERRED, UP TO NOW, TO AVOID: WHAT HAPPENS IN GENEVA IF ARABS AND SOVIET UNION INSIST ON PALESTINIANS' BEING REPRESENTED? SHOULD US BACK ISRAEL'S OPPOSITION TO PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION, WHICH SPEAKS FOR PALESTINIANS, OR TAKE POSITION ISRAEL IS NOT LIKELY TO SUPPORT?

SHOULD US DECLARE ITSELF IN SOME WAY ON ARAB LANDS OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL OR TRY TO REMAIN NEUTRAL AND THEREBY ISOLATE ITSELF IN ARAB WORLD WITHOUT GAINING FRIENDS IN ISRAEL EITHER? CAN FORMULAS BE WORKED OUT ON SUCH EMOTIONALLY

CHARGED ISSUES AS JERUSALEM OR GOLAN HEIGHTS?

DOES US, IN MIDST OF POSSIBLE GENEVA CONFERENCE, WANT TO BE SENDING NEW MILITARY SUPPLIES TO ISRAEL?

IF IT DOES NOT, CAN IT AVOID DOING SO GIVEN STRONG SUPPORT

ISRAEL HAS RECEIVED ON CAPITAL HILL, SYMBOLIZED BY LETTER OF 76 SENATORS LAST WEEK URGING ADMIN TO MEET ISRAEL'S AID NEEDS OF \$2.5 BILLION FOR NEXT FISCAL YEAR?

2. TERENCE SMITH, "ISRAEL RESISTING US ON SINAI PACT"-- OFFICIALS, CITING SUPPORT OF SENATORS, SAY INITIATIVE WILL BE LEFT TO EGYPT.

BUOYED BY RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS OF CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT, UNCLASSIFIED

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ISRAEL HAS DECIDED TO IGNORE US'S REPEATED REQUESTS THAT SHE PRODUCE NEW NEGOTIATING PROPOSALS BEFORE AMERICAN-EGYPTIAN MEETING IN SALZBURG NEXT SUNDAY, ACCORDING TO SENIOR ISRAELI OFFICIALS.

IN PRIVATE CONTACTS DURING LAST FEW WEEKS, OFFICIALS SAID, US HAS URGED ISRAEL TO COME FORWARD WITH NEW IDEAS ON AN INTERIM SINAI ACCORD WITH EGYPT THAT FORD CAN CARRY INTO HIS MEETING JUNE 1 AND 2 WITH SADAT.

BUT ISRAEL HAS DECIDED AGAINST IT, OFFICIALS SAID, PARTLY BECAUSE SHE WANTS EGYPT TO MAKE FIRST CONCESSION, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF DISPLAY OF CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT REPRESENTED BY LETTER SIGNED LAST WEEK BY 76 SENATORS CALLING FOR GENEROUS MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL.

LETTER, IN VIEW OF ISRAELI LEADERSHIP, DEMONSTRATES THAT THERE IS LIMIT TO POLITICAL LEVERAGE FORD ADMIN CAN APPLY AGAINST ISRAEL IN COURSE OF ITS CURRENT REASSESSMENT OF ME POLICY. ISRAELI OFFICIALS WERE DELIGHTED BY TIMING AND CONTENT OF LETTER, WHICH THEY HAVE HAPPILY TAKEN TO CALLING "THE SPIRIT OF THE 76".

LETTER HAS CONVINCED RABIN AND HIS ADVISERS THAT THEY WERE RIGHT IN DECIDING TO STAND FAST ON ISRAEL'S PUBLISHED CONDITIONS FOR A NEW ACCORD AND OUTWAIT US'S POLICY REASSESSMENT, WHICH THEY REGARD AS NOTHING MORE THAN PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO SOFTEN HER POSITION.

DECISION NOT TO COME UP WITH NEW PROPOSALS BEFORE SALZBURG MEETING IS LATEST INDICATION THAT DIPLOMATIC TEST OF WILLS BETWEEN RABIN GOVT AND FORD ADMIN CONTINUES UNABATED.

STRAINS BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND JERUSALEM DEVELOPED AFTER MARCH 22 WHEN HAK'S EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE AN INTERIM AGREEMENT ON SINAI BROKE DOWN.

SINCE THEN, THERE HAVE BEEN ONLY LIMITED DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS BETWEEN TWO GOVERNMENTS. LITTLE ADVANCE PREPARATION HAS BEEN MADE SO FAR FOR SCHEDULED WASHINGTON MTG BETWEEN RABIN AND FORD ON JUNE 11 AND 12. ROUGH SCHEDULE

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HAS BEEN WORKED OUT, BUT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NONE OF DETAILED DISCUSSION OF AGENDA AND SUBSTANCE THAT NORMALLY PRECEDES SUCH A MEETING.

"IT'S GOING TO BE A SURPRISE PARTY," ONE ISRAELI OFFICIAL SAID WITH A SARDONIC SMILE. "APPARENTLY WE'RE GOING TO BE KEPT GUESSING UP TO THE LAST MINUTE."

RABIN IS KNOWN TO BE RESENTFUL ABOUT CRITICISMS OF HIS GOVT THAT HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO HAK, WHO HAS MADE NO SECRET OF HIS BELIEF THAT ISRAEL SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE FLEXIBLE DURING NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT.

ISRAELI PREMIER HAS FELT FOR SOME TIME THAT ISRAEL HAS NO PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE BUT TO LET FORD ADMIN VENT ITS ANGER AT ISRAEL. ONLY AFTER COOLING OFF PERIOD, HE HAS SAID, CAN ISRAEL-AMERICAN RELATIONS RETURN TO NORMAL AND NEGOTIATING PROCESS RESUME.

RABIN IS UNDERSTOOD TO BELIEVE, FOR INSTANCE, THAT IT WOULD BE POINTLESS FOR HIM TO TRY NOW TO MAKE ANY FURTHER PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF ISRAEL'S NEGOTIATING POSITION, EVEN THOUGH HE HAS BEEN URGED BY ADVISERS TO DO SO IO IMPROVE ISRAEL'S IMAGE. IN PRESENT CLIMATE, RABIN HAS CONTENDED, ANYTHING HE SAYS WOULD BE PROMPTLY COUNTERED BY HAK, AND WHOLE ARGUMENT OVER WHO WAS TO BLAME FOR BREAKDOWN WOULD ONLY BE REVIVED.

ISRAEL'S STRATEGY AT MOMENT IS TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT EMERGES FROM SALZBURG MEETING AND RABIN'S SUBSEQUENT TALKS IN WASHINGTON. ISRAELIS FEEL THEY NOW HAVE ADDITIONAL BREATH--ING SPACE AS RESULT OF SYRIA'S SURPRISE DECISION TO RENEW MANDATE OF UN DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVATION FORCE ON GOLAN HEIGHTS FOR ANOTHER 6 MONTHS. THIS MOVE, IN VIEW OF ISRAELI ANALYSTS, HAS SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED CHANCES OF NEW OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING IN NEAR FUTURE.

DESPITE BREAKDOWN OF LAST EFFORT TO ACHIEVE AN INTERIM ACCORD WITH EGYPT, ISRAELIS STILL BELIEVE THAT ANOTHER LIMITED AGREEMENT ON SINAI IS ONLY FEASIBLE DIPLOMATIC STEP AT THIS POINT. ALTERNATIVE--NEGOTIATING AN OVER-ALL PEACE UNCLASSIFIED

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AGREEMENT AT GENEVA OR ELSEWHERE--WAS DESCRIBED BY AN ISRAEL OFFICIAL AS "A COMPLETE IMPOSSIBILITY" UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

DESPITE HAK'S FAILURE LAST MARCH AND HIS SUBSEQUENT DIS-

PLAYS OF PIQUE WITH ISRAEL, HE IS STILL VIEWED HERE AS BEST POSSIBLE MEDIATOR IN RENEWED NEGOTIATING EFFORT. ISRAELIS HOPE THAT TALKS TOWARD NEW SINAI ACCORD CAN RESUME AGAIN UNDER HAK'S AUSPICES AFTER FORD'S MEETING WITH RABIN.

KEY TO BREAKING CURRENT STALEMATE AS FAR AS ISRAELIS ARE CONCERNED IS DURATION OF ANY NEW AGREEMENT THAT IS TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH EGYPT.

THIS, ACCORDING TO ISRAELI SOURCES, IS CRUCIAL ISSUE ON WHICH LAST ROUND OF TALKS COLLAPSED AND NOT, AS HAS BEEN REPORTED, INITIAL ISRAELI DEMAND FOR AN EGYPTIAN DECLARATION OF NON-BELLIGERENCY. ISRAELIS MAINTAIN THAT, BY END OF NEGOTIATIONS, THEY HAD AGREED TO ACCEPT LESSER FORMULATION OF AN EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT NOT TO RESORT TO THREAT OR USE OF FORCE AGAINST ISRAEL.

STUMBLING BLOCK, ACCORDING TO ISRAELIS, WAS DURATION OF AGREEMENT. EGYPT REPORTEDLY OFFERED TO EXTEND MANDATE OF UN EMERGENCY FORCE IN SINAI FOR ONE YEAR AND THEN RENEW IT ANNUALLY. IN ISRAELI INTERPRETATION, THAT MEANT A ONE-YEAR AGREEMENT THAT MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE SUBSEQUENTLY EXTENDED. JERUSALEM THEREFORE REJECTED IT AS INADEQUATE.

IF EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT COULD BE EXTENDED TO 3 OR MORE YEARS, ISRAELI OFFICIALS SAY NOW, THIS WOULD OPEN WAY TO A RESUMPTION OF TALKS. IN ADDITION TO THIS EXTENDED DURATION, ISRAEL WOULD ALSO SEEK SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN EGYPTIAN ECONOMIC BOYCOTT OF COMPANIES DOING BUSINESS WITH ISRAEL AND OTHER SIGNALS OF CHANGE IN POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE.

IN EXCHANGE, ISRAELI OFFICIALS SAY NOW, ISRAEL WOULD BE PREPARED TO COME UP WITH NEW FORMULATIONS OF HER OWN, INCLUDING BOTH TERRITORIAL AND POLITICAL CONCESSIONS.
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OFFICIALS DECLINED TO SPECIFY THESE CONCESSIONS, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT ISRAEL WOULD BE PREPARED TO WITHDRAW FROM WESTERN END OF SINAI MT PASSES AND OILFIELD AT ABU RUDEIS.

THIS POSITION IS REMINISCENT OF ISRAELI POSTURE AT CLOSE OF NEGOTIATIONS. ISRAEL'S FINAL OFFER IN MARCH TALKS WAS TO DIVIDE PASSES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPTIAN CONTROL IN EXCHANGE FOR AN EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT ON NON-USE OF FORCE.

EGYPT REJECTED THIS OFFER THEN, AND, IN OPINION OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATS, WOULD STILL BE LIKELY TO DO SO TODAY.

DEEPER ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WOULD PRESUMABLY BE REQUIRED, THEREFORE, IF A NEW ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS IS TO SUCCEED WHERE THE FIRST FAILED.

IN MEANTIME, ISRAELI OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED WITH SIZE OF AID PACKAGE US WILL PROPOSE FOR ISRAEL FOR COMING FISCAL YEAR. ISRAEL EXPECTS THAT SHE WILL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR LESS THAN HER REQUEST FOR \$2.5 BILLION IN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

ON MILITARY SIDE, ISRAELI OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT KEY REQUEST, GROUND-TO-GROUND LANCE MISSILE, WILL BE APPROVED ONCE POLICY REASSESSMENT HAS BEEN COMPLETED. ISRAELIS ALSO EXPECT ULTIMATE APPROVAL OF F-15 FIGHTERS THAT ISRAEL IS SEEKING TO MODERNIZE HER AIR FORCE. INGERSOLL

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